DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 266 142 SP 027 319

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TITLE Teacher Job Satisfaction: A Perspective.
PUB DATE Feb 86
NOTE 25p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators (Atlanta, GA, February 22-26, 1986).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Secondary Education; Faculty Mobility; *Job Satisfaction; Professional Recognition; *Teacher Attitudes; Teacher Characteristics; *Teaching (Occupation); Teaching Conditions

ABSTRACT

This study consisted of the development of the Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (TJSQ), designed to assess teacher job satisfaction in elementary and secondary schools. A thorough review was conducted of concepts, theories, and approaches related to job satisfaction in order to develop a clear definition of job satisfaction. A list of different factors which might account for teacher job satisfaction was compiled after a systematic review of the literature. These factors were given operational definitions and an item pool was created. Statistical procedures were followed to develop a representative sample of items, and tests of reliability and validity were performed. A pilot study was conducted to improve the instrument before the final study. Item analyses and tests for item discrimination were performed to eliminate undesirable items. The questionnaire sought to identify the reasons people choose teaching as a career, the characteristics of teaching and reasons people leave teaching. The TJSQ was submitted to randomly selected teachers at all levels (in New York City, and Westchester, Nassau and Suffolk counties) and 620 returns were received. Resulting data is discussed and areas of general dissatisfaction are identified. Suggestions are made for administrators on evaluating staff attitudes and improving teaching conditions. (JD)

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Teacher Job Satisfaction: A Perspective

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Paper presented at Association of Teacher Educators
Atlanta, Georgia, February 22-26, 1986

SP027319

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Teacher Job Satisfaction

Because teaching is unique (Lortie, 1975), it is essential to explore the nature of the educational work setting and the characteristics of teachers themselves in order to understand teacher job satisfaction. Prior to the development of the TJSQ (Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire), it was necessary to identify (a) the reasons people choose teaching as an occupation, (b) the characteristics of teaching, and (c) the reasons people leave teaching. This study consisted of the development of an instrument (TJSQ) designed to assess teacher job satisfaction in elementary, junior high (middle) schools, and senior high schools. The following procedures were conducted to develop the TJSQ:

1. Conceptual. A thorough review of concepts, theories, and approaches related to job satisfaction was conducted in order to develop a clear definition of job satisfaction.

2. Job characteristics. A list of different factors which might account for teacher job satisfaction was compiled after a systematic review of the literature. These factors were given operational definitions and an item pool was created.

3. Psychometric characteristics. Statistical procedures were followed to develop a representative sample of items. Tests of reliability and validity were performed.

4. Pilot study. A pilot study was conducted with subjects similar to the population in the final study to improve the instrument before the final study. Item analyses and tests for item discrimination were

performed to eliminate undesirable items. An initial test of reliability was also conducted.

5. Administration of the TJSQ. An appropriate sample was randomly selected to complete the instrument. Factor analysis and reliability procedures were employed.

In order to generate a taxonomy for the development of this instrument, the theories of Maslow and Herzberg were explored as sources of job satisfaction. These theories contain specific concepts that correspond to the factors logically found in the educational setting, and which were identified in the development of the TJSQ. Consequently, their theories provide a system of classification that supports the conceptual foundation of this study.

Review of the Literature

Of more than 35,000 occupations listed in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, between 35% and 40% of all people in the professional services are grouped as teachers (Gould & Yoakam, 1947). There is no other occupation with a membership of over a million college graduates and tens of thousands with advanced degrees (Lortie, 1975). Because more college students prepare for teaching careers than for any other single area of work, it is important to study (a) why people choose teaching as a profession, (b) the characteristics of the teaching occupation, and (c) reasons for leaving teaching. Such background helps explain not only the choice of teaching as a career, but also what constitutes teacher job satisfaction.

Why People Choose Teaching as a Profession

Lortie (1975) examines the attractions of teaching and identified eight reasons (which he called appeals) for becoming a teacher. First is interpersonal appeal--people become teachers because they are interested in children and want to help develop a youngster's potential. In the second category is service appeal--people become teachers in order to perform a special mission in the community, teaching is an opportunity to serve society, and the teacher is a moral agent dedicated to serving the public. Continuation appeal is another category--people choose teaching because they enjoyed school as students. Material benefits, such as job security, prestige, and money form the fourth appeal. Five-day work weeks, short workdays, many holidays, and long summer vacations help make teaching an appealing occupation. Socioeconomic constraints make teachers' colleges economically accessible for many, thereby increasing the number of teachers. For others, teaching is a "safety net." People who cannot enter a more preferred line of work can become teachers without loss of status. Finally, teaching appeals to some as a second career after trying other work.

In a study conducted by the National Education Association in 1981, teachers were requested to choose three reasons (from a list of 19 items) for originally choosing teaching as a profession. At least 20% of the respondents reported the following eight reasons: (a) a desire to work with young people, (b) interest in a subject matter field, (c) the value or significance of education in society, (d) the influence of a teacher or advisor in elementary or secondary school, (e) the influence of family,

(f) long summer vacation, (g) job security, and (h) never really considered anything else. Age, sex, and school level accounted for the major differences between groups in analyzing these reasons. Teachers under age 30 cited a desire to work with young people and the long summer vacation more frequently than did teachers over 30. Teachers under age 40 chose interest in a subject matter field more frequently than older teachers. The importance of job security was cited more frequently by teachers over 30. More males indicated a desire to work with young people and interest in a subject matter field than did females. However, more females than males indicated that they had never considered any other career and that they were influenced by their families. Elementary and junior high or middle school teachers selected a desire to work with young people more often than did senior high school teachers, whereas junior high or middle school teachers cited interest in a subject matter field more frequently than did elementary school teachers. Finally, more elementary school teachers than junior high, middle school, or high school teachers, indicated that they never really considered anything else (NEA, 1981).

A comparison of these two studies reveals that the primary reasons for selecting teaching as an occupation are love of teaching and of children, liking of subject field, desire to serve, financial benefits, and the influence of school and former teachers.

Characteristics of Teaching

In a study by England and Stein (1961), various occupational groups responded to items describing the following areas of the work environment:

co-workers, company, communication, hours, pay, promotion, recognition, security, supervision, type of work, and working conditions. The authors conclude that significant occupational differences make it necessary to identify important areas of interest for each occupational group. They recommend the development of scales that emphasize particular areas of importance for each occupation.

Teaching is unique (Lortie, 1975), and, as a career, offers "opportunities for service and for personal satisfaction which are equaled by very few professions" (Gould & Yoakam, 1947, p. 3). Lortie (1975) discusses three types of teaching rewards. The first type is extrinsic reward, which includes salary and prestige, and is seen as being independent of the teacher. The second type of reward is linked to the objective nature of the work as perceived by the teacher and is labeled ancillary reward. The final type of reward is psychic or intrinsic reward, which is subjective and varies from teacher to teacher. Lortie asserts that "the structure of teaching favors psychic rewards" (pp. 101-103).

According to Dorros (1968), the work climate of teaching entails a number of aspects. Professional status involves recognition and the opportunity to make decisions. Personnel policies signify the duties and responsibilities of the teacher, the teaching conditions, and the process for hiring teachers. Work load denotes the teacher's daily activities, such as class size, record keeping activities, and preparation of lesson plans. Instructional material and equipment include money for textbooks and supplies. Physical conditions are encompassed by

the buildings themselves. Security of position refers to tenure and seniority. Academic freedom alludes to the right to teach the truth as perceived by the teachers. Personal freedom means engaging in activities outside school without fear of reprisal. Dorros identified problems in the work climate of the school involving a lack of teacher autonomy, inefficient administration, misassignment of teachers, excessive work load, extracurricular duties, and a lack of security in some school systems.

Other characteristics of teaching worthy of mention are income, status, and the work schedule. For Dorros (1968), the economic welfare of teachers consists of salaries, retirement benefits, fringe benefits, and other aspects related to working conditions. Lortie (1975) views teacher income in terms of a trade-off between the amount of money received and the amount of risk involved. Lower salaries are more expected in the public sector than in private industry.

Teaching has been considered a white-collar, middle-class occupation. Traditionally, teaching has offered its members an opportunity for upward mobility. Unfortunately, the teaching occupation has a low standing in the community (Waller, 1965), even though society values learning.

Finally, the work schedule of teachers has received much publicity. The average teacher works five short days per week with many holidays and long summer vacations. Women who become teachers view teaching as an in-and-out arrangement, dependent upon marital and maternal commitments (Lortie, 1975), with teaching as a secondary commitment, and family the primary commitment. Lortie found that women have time to perform

household duties and have a work schedule that coincides with the schedules of young school-age children.

On the other hand, Lortie found that men view teaching as a means toward an end, seek administrative positions, or leave for better positions, more pay, and the higher standard of living that private industry can offer. In other words, for many people, teaching does not represent a full-time commitment.

Following the recommendation made by England and Stein (1961), that particular areas of importance be emphasized for various occupations, the characteristics of the teaching occupation that seem to require further investigation are: (a) co-workers (colleagues, fellow techers), (b) company (school), (c) pay, (d) promotion, (e) recognition, (f) security, (g) supervision, (h) type of work (instructional material, work load), and (i) working conditions (physical conditions).

Reasons for Leaving Teaching

Crane and Ervit (1955) identify 14 reasons for leaving teaching in New York State. Among the reasons given by female teachers, the researchers note (a) marriage, (b) married and moving to another state, (c) decision to have children, (d) pregnancy, and (e) home and children considered a full-time job. These reasons coincide with the view of teaching as an in-and-out arrangement dependent upon marital and maternal commitments.

Inadequate salary, not being granted tenure, conflict and/or dissatisfaction with administration, teaching situation, lack of discipline or respect by pupils, and teaching load are among additional reasons for leaving, as cited by Crane and Ervit (1955). Certification problems,

geographic location of the community, and the feeling of being unsuited for teaching are other cited reasons.

Dillon (1978) has identified 10 factors that may influence the decision to leave teaching. They are: (a) long hours, (b) too much preparation for classroom teaching, (c) lack of student interest, (d) salaries, (e) personality conflict with school administration, (f) time, (g) lack of advancement opportunities, (h) inadequate knowledge of subject matter, (i) lack of variety on the job, and (j) poor fringe benefits.

Knight (1978), in a review of related literature, found seven major categories that influence teachers to leave the profession. The categories are: (a) student related concerns, (b) time requirements of the job, (c) job characteristics, (d) personal concerns, (e) administrative and supervisory concerns, (f) preparation for teaching, and (g) factors outside the profession.

It should be noted that some of the cited reasons for leaving have also been found in studies of reasons for entering the profession of teaching. Women enter and leave because of marital and maternal commitments. Additionally, financial and material benefits are frequently cited as reasons for entering and leaving. Pay, job security, and prestige (status) are three rewards that teaching can provide. When they are present, they contribute to job satisfaction, whereas when they are absent, they contribute to job dissatisfaction, and eventually to the decision to leave teaching. Other aspects of the work environment that are potential sources of dissatisfaction are poor fringe benefits, lack of opportunity for advancement, administration, pupils, and the job of teaching.

Research Methodology

The population from which the sample was drawn includes teachers from New York City, Westchester, Nassau, and Suffolk Counties. Within each of these four geographic locations, a sample of two school districts was randomly selected by using a table of random numbers. Within each of the eight school districts thus identified, an elementary, junior high school, and a senior high school were randomly selected. Of the 1,600 instruments and personal data forms distributed to teachers in these schools, 631 returns were received from all eight districts, providing 620 usable returns.

Frequency distributions for items and for factor scores were obtained, and response patterns examined to assess the variability of ratings.

The internal consistency of the TJSQ was examined by obtaining coefficient alpha for each scale and for the total score (.93).

Factor analysis was undertaken as an exploratory technique to help discover underlying factors and as a psychometric procedure for the development and refinement of the TJSQ. A terminal nine factor, orthogonal varimax solution was accepted using the criterion of Eigenvalues greater than or equal to unity. The nine factors are: Supervision, Colleagues, Working Conditions, Pay, Responsibility, Work Itself, Advancement, Security, and Recogntion.

The data were classified by sampling procedure into system level variables of location (urban/suburban), school district size (small/large), county, school level, and district. Descriptive statistics were computed to summarize the similarities and differences of job satisfaction scores

on the various scales (factors) in relation to the system level variables and the personal and demographic variables found in the personal data form (age, sex, marital status, total years of teaching experience, years in district, educational level, tenure, and union affiliation).

Similarities and differences among elementary, junior high schools, senior high schools, and the eight school districts on the nine factors were studied by obtaining the scale means and standard deviations and by examining the distribution of scores. One-way analyses of variance, with significance at the .05 level, were performed among the system level variables to test statistically whether the means of the groups were significantly different from each other.

Findings

Teacher Characteristics

The population from which the sample (n = 620) was drawn includes teachers from two urban school districts in New York City (n = 145) and six suburban school districts (two from each geographic location) in Westchester (n = 128), Nassau (n = 148), and Suffolk (n = 199) Counties.

Within each of the eight school districts, one elementary school, one junior high school, and one senior high school were randomly selected from each district. In summary, eight school districts, each representing three school levels within four geographic locations, participated in this study.

The descriptive data on the sample are organized by cross tabulations and means and standard deviations with the variables of (a) location (urban/suburban), (b) size of district (large/small), (c) county in

which district is located, (d) school level, and (e) district. The following analysis of the demographic data is organized by the personal and demographic variables of sex, age, marital status, total years teaching experience, years in the district (seniority), educational level, tenure, and union membership.

Sex. Approximately 57% (n = 343) of all teachers, regardless of school level, are female, while 43% (n = 260) are male. In the elementary schools, over 80% are females, whereas in the junior and senior high schools, the ratio of male to female teachers is equal (50% each).

Age. The mean age for both males and females, regardless of school level, is 42 years (N = 556, SD = 9.1). The mean age for both males and females in the elementary schools is 43 years (n = 125, SD = 9.3), 40 years in the junior high schools (n = 166, SD = 9.2), and 42 years in the senior high schools (n = 265, SD = 8.8). The teachers in the elementary schools are the oldest and the teachers in the junior high schools the youngest.

Marital status. Of the total sample, 73% (435) of both males and females are married. Of all elementary school teachers, 71.5% (98) are are married, whereas 73% (337) of all junior and senior high school teachers married.

Total number of years teaching. The mean number of total years teaching for both males and females, at all levels, is 16 years (N = 595, SD = 7.2). The mean for males and females at the elementary school level is 17 years (n = 135, SD = 7.1), 15 years at the junior high school level (n = 174, SD = 7.2), and approximately 16.5 years at the senior

high school level (n = 280, SD = 7.1). Teachers in the elementary schools have the greatest number of years of total teaching experience, whereas teachers in the junior high schools have the least.

Years in district. The total number of years teaching within the district (seniority), across all levels, for both males and females is 13 years (N = 592, SD = 6.8). At the elementary school level, the mean for both sexes is 14 years (n = 134, SD = 7.3). At the junior high school level the mean for males and females is approximately 12.5 years (n = 173, SD = 6.7), and at the senior high school level the mean is 13 years (n = 265, SD = 6.5). Elementary school teachers generally have the most seniority, whereas junior high school teachers have the least seniority.

Educational level. An analysis of the educational level of respondents shows that 8% (48) of both males and females hold a bachelor's degree, and 25% (149) hold a master's degree. Thirty-two percent (194) have a master's degree plus 30 credits, and 21% (127) have a master's degree plus 60 credits. Doctoral degrees are reported by 2% (11) and 12% (70) hold other degrees. When analyzed by school level, the data show that 88% of all elementary school teachers, 85% of all junior high school teachers, and 87% of all senior high school teachers have at least a bachelor's degree. The majority of teachers in the elementary school hold a master's degree and/or a master's degree plus 30 credits, whereas the majority of teachers in the junior and senior high schools hold a master's degree plus 30 credits.

Tenure. Regardless of school level, 89% (532) of males and females are tenured. At the elementary school level, 89% (123) of all teachers, compared to 86% (51) at the junior high school level, are tenured. At the senior high school level, 90% (258) of all teachers are tenured.

Union membership. Ninety-six percent (577) of all teachers surveyed belong to a union. When analyzed by school level, 99% (135) of all elementary school teachers, 94% (165) of all junior high school teachers, and 96% (277) of all senior high school teachers are union members.

Summary profile. In summary, the typical elementary school teacher in this study is a married female, approximately 43 years old, with 17 years of teaching experience, about 14 years of which are in the present school district. She has a master's degree or a master's degree plus 30 credits, has tenure, and is a member of the union.

Although the elementary school teacher is usually female, there are approximately equal numbers of men and women teaching at the junior high school level. The typical teacher at this level is married, approximately 40 years old, with 15 years of teaching experience, of which 12.5 years are in the present school district. The junior high school teacher has attained about the same academic level as the elementary school counterpart; that is, he/she has earned a master's degree or a master's degree plus 30 credits, is tenured, and is a member of the union.

At the high school level, there are approximately the same number of male and female teachers. The typical teacher is married, about 42 years old, with 16.5 years of teaching experience, of which 13 years

are in the present school district. The educational level is somewhat higher than at the elementary and junior high school levels, since most high school teachers possess a master's degree plus 30 or 60 credits. The typical high school teacher is tenured and is a union member.

School Level

Table 1 lists the means and standard deviations for each of the nine factors of the TJSQ by school level (elementary, junior high school, and high school). Six factors (Supervision, Colleagues, Working Conditions, Pay, Responsibility, and Work Itself) demonstrate significant differences among school levels at the .05 level.

Insert Table 1 about here

On the Supervision scale, the means and standard deviations for elementary schools ($\bar{X}$ = 45.8, SD = 10.3) and senior high schools ($\bar{X}$ = 50.2, SD = 10.2) show significant differences, indicating that senior high school teachers are more satisfied with supervision than elementary school teachers.

On the other hand, elementary school teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 37.5, SD = 4.3) demonstrate higher satisfaction with colleagues than senior high school teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 35.7, SD = 5.9).

The same finding holds true for the scale of Working Conditions. Elementary school teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 23.4, SD = 5.0) are more satisfied with working conditions than are senior high school teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 21.5, SD = 5.4). Junior high school teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 22.8, SD = 5.2) are also more satisfied with working conditions than senior high school teachers.

The Pay scale means and standard deviations demonstrate that both elementary school teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 19.1, SD = 4.6) and junior high school teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 18.6, SD = 5.1) are more satisfied with pay than senior high school teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 17.3, SD = 5.3).

Elementary school teachers also appear to be more satisfied with responsibility ($\bar{X}$ = 34.5, SD = 3.0) than are senior high school teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 33.6, SD = 3.5).

Once again, elementary school teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 34.7, SD = 4.8) are more satisfied with work itself than are senior high school teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 32.6, SD = 5.9).

Summary

One-way analyses of variance were performed with each of the system level variables and the nine factors of the TJSQ to identify differences among the various groups. Based upon location (urban or suburban), the five factors denoting pairs of groups significantly different at the .05 level were Supervision, Working Conditions, Pay, Work Itself, and Advancement. Suburban districts were more satisfied than were urban districts, except for the factor of Supervision.

Analysis by the variable of size (small or large district) showed that only the factor of Pay demonstrated significance between small and large districts with small districts being more satisfied than large districts. This finding is consistent with the findings of the National Education Association (1982) regarding the relationship between size of the school district and satisfaction. The National Education Association found that the larger the school system, the greater the

dissatisfaction; that is, teachers in small districts are more satisfied than teachers in large districts.

When analyzed by county (New York City, Westchester, Nassau, and Suffolk), Working Conditions, Pay, and Work Itself demonstrated significant differences. New York City was the least satisfied area on all three factors, whereas each of the three other counties were the most satisfied on at least one factor.

Analysis by school level (elementary, junior high school, and senior high school) demonstrated significant differences between groups on the factors of Supervision, Colleagues, Working Conditions, Pay, Responsibility, and Work Itself. Elementary school teachers were more satisfied than senior high school teachers on all these factors, except Supervision. This finding is also consistent with the findings of the National Education Association (1982), which found that elementary school teachers are the most satisfied, and senior high school teachers are the most dissatisfied.

Finally, analyses by the variable of the eight school districts showed evidence of significance at the .05 level for differences between groups on the factors of Supervision, Working Conditions, Pay, and Work Itself.

Conclusions

Disregarding location, size, county, school level, district, and school level within the district, teachers generally are satisfied with colleagues, responsibility, and the work itself. Except for teachers in the elementary school in District 5 (highly motivated, upward-bound, upper middle-class community in Suffolk) and in the junior high school in District 8 (residential, lower middle-class to middle-class community

in Suffolk), teachers generally are satisfied with supervision. Teachers generally are also satisfied with security, except in the junior high schools in Districts 3 (conservative, working-class community in Nassau) and 2 (racially mixed, below average income community in Westchester), and in the senior high schools in Districts 1 (rural, low wealth community in Westchester) and 7 (highly mobile, low income-high crime borough in New York City). Regardless of location, size, county, or school level, teachers generally are satisfied with working conditions, except for teachers in Districts 2 and 7, elementary school teachers in Districts 5 and 7, junior high school teachers in District 4 (property-poor collection of diverse neighborhoods in Nassau) and 1, and senior high school teachers in Districts 2 and 7.

Disregarding location, size, county, school level, district, and school level within the district, teachers are dissatisfied with advancement. Only teachers in the elementary school in District 2 (racially mixed, below average income community in Westchester) are satisfied with pay. Regardless of location, size, county, school level, and district, teachers are generally dissatisfied with recognition, except elementary school teachers in District 8 (residential, lower middle-class to middle-class community in New York City), junior high school teachers in District 6 (status quo, lower middle-class community in Suffolk), and senior high school teachers in District 3 (conservative, working-class community in Westchester).

Implications

College graduates are not choosing the teaching profession because of low salaries, increased violence in the schools, poor working conditions, and the large amount of paper work (clerical duties) involved. However, according to the present study, teachers are not as dissatisfied as expected. Teachers are dissatisfied with pay, advancement, and recognition, but satisfied with supervision, colleagues, responsibility, work itself, and security, except for a few elementary and junior high school teachers within specific districts. Working conditions is one area that shows dissatisfaction at the district level, as well as at the school level within specific districts. The fact that all but one of these results are within one standard deviation from the mean indicates that, regardless of location, size of district, county, school level, and district, teachers generally feel similarly about their jobs. Basically, those aspects of the job that are negatively perceived (pay, advancement, and recognition) are perceived as such by most teachers. However, their perceptions of those aspects of the job that are positive vary slightly.

School administrators can use this instrument to find out how their teachers feel about what they do. Administrators can gain valuable information about how their teachers evaluate their present teaching positions in order to determine teachers' expectations about the job and the work environment. Administration of the TJSQ to all teachers within a school district may promote the discovery of those aspects of the work setting that contribute to teacher job satisfaction. By careful examination of the results for each school within each level

in a district, useful information may be obtained about the characteristics of the work situation and the characteristics of individuals. Such analysis may be utilized to redesign jobs to further strengthen the organizational fit between the job and the person. Educational policy decisions need to consider the importance of each aspect of the job to the individual rather than merely the level of overall job satisfaction. The results provided by the interaction between the nature of the work setting and individual teachers may facilitate effective job restructuring in order to maximize the achievement of organizational and individual goals and ultimately to improve teacher job satisfaction.

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Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire by School Level

	School level								
	Elementary			Junior high			Senior high		
Factor	n	$\bar{X}$	SD	n	$\bar{X}$	SD	n	$\bar{X}$	SD
Supervision	137	45.8	10.3	174	48.7	11.2	285	50.2	10.2
Colleagues	142	37.5	4.3	176	38.5	5.6	295	35.7	5.9
Working conditions	139	23.4	5.0	177	22.8	5.2	291	21.5	5.4
Pay	141	19.1	4.6	177	18.6	5.1	291	17.3	5.3
Responsibility	142	34.5	3.0	176	34.0	3.6	290	33.6	3.5
Work itself	137	34.7	4.8	177	33.5	5.4	292	32.6	5.9
Advancement	139	13.1	3.8	171	12.1	4.0	284	12.1	4.1
Security	141	11.0	2.6	178	10.4	2.7	296	10.4	2.9
Recognition	142	9.2	2.9	178	9.3	2.8	296	9.0	2.8